

c) Amendments to the Claims

Kindly cancel claims 1-6 without prejudice or disclaimer and amend claim 7 as follows. A complete listing of all the claims that are or were in the application follows.

Claims 1. - 6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) A thin-film deposition process which forms a thin fluoride film by means of a vacuum deposition system comprising a film-forming chamber to be kept at a stated degree of vacuum, and provided therein a substrate holder which holds a substrate and a vapor-generating means which generates a vapor of a fluoride deposition material which is to be vacuum-deposited on the surface of the substrate to form a thin fluoride film, ~~said vapor subject to scattering during vacuum deposition which reduces said film quality~~, the system further comprising

a reaction chamber provided therein with an ionization means which ionizes ~~by the plasma~~ a source gas containing fluorine gas to form a plasma ~~for remediating defects in the thin film caused by deposition of scattered vapor~~; and

a communicating portion which makes the inside of the film-forming chamber and the inside of the reaction chamber communicate with each other and has a pressure control means which controls differential pressure between the film-forming chamber and the reaction chamber, the process comprising the steps of:

ionizing the source gas containing fluorine gas in the reaction chamber and thereafter opening the pressure control means of the communicating portion to introduce the ionized source gas containing fluorine gas into the film-forming chamber; and generating the vapor of the fluoride deposition material in the film-forming chamber to form the thin fluoride film.

8. (Original) The thin-film deposition process according to claim 7, wherein the film-forming chamber is kept at an internal pressure of 13 mPa or less, and the reaction chamber is kept at an internal pressure of from 0.3 Pa to 7 Pa.--